

**Department of Veterans Affairs**  
**Suggested Activities for Special Emphasis Program Observances**

Suggested activities for Special Emphasis Program (SEP) observance include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- Announcement and other messages by the facility director or other leadership requesting participation and support of all managers, supervisors, and employees for the special program activities through email, local facility newsletter, SharePoint, or other communications vehicles.
- Presentations, workshops, seminars, or brown bag/lunch and learn sessions for managers, supervisors, and employees on diversity and inclusion programs.
- Training and career development opportunities including conferences or other training opportunities offered by affinity organizations. Such affinity organizations include but are not limited to: African American Federal Executive Association (AAFEA), Asian American Government Executives Network (AAGEN), Blacks in Government (BIG), Blinded Veterans Association (BVA), Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC), Federally Employed Women (FEW), Gay and Lesbian Medical Association (GLMA), Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities' (HACU), League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), National Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), Out & Equal, and Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE). The involvement of affinity organizations can encourage qualified individuals to apply for positions at VA for a more diverse applicant pool. The list of affinity organizations and affiliated training opportunities is maintained on the [VA SEP webpage](#).
- Webinars by guest speakers such as community leaders or local government representatives, professional or affinity organizations, or minority-serving institutions/academia on diversity and inclusion issues. Minority-serving institutions include but are not limited to: Historically Black College Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), Asian American and Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AAPSIs), and Tribal College and Universities (TCUs).
- Award ceremonies to honor outstanding employees who have contributed to diversity and inclusion efforts or effectively resolved conflicts in the workplace. Visit the [Secretary's Diversity and Inclusion Excellence Awards webpage](#) or the [Secretary's Alternative Dispute Resolution Excellence Awards webpage](#) for more information.
- Mentoring programs at the facility level for all levels of employees from interns to supervisors.
- Communication of best practices that promote diversity, inclusion and engagement in the workplace.
- Share the experiences of members from the SEP group who been able to advance while overcoming barriers and obstacles.
- Panel of subject matter experts addressing topics on the observance theme and participate in a question and answer session.
- Share direct quotes, stories and literature shared in relation to the annual SEP observance theme.